(b) if so, the total number of such unremunerative routes;

(c) the total losses incurred on the said routes till the end of March, 2000 by running trains on them;

(d) whether administration has made any efforts in the recent past to convert unremunerative routes into remunerative ones; and

(e) if so, the number of such routes which have been converted into remunerative ones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the financial results of 1998-99, 125 lines were assessed to be unremunerative.

(c) Railways suffered a loss of Rs. 377 Crore on the working of these lines during 1998-99. The figures for the year 1999-2000 are not available.

(d) and (e) In addition to the commercial aspect of its operations, Railways also have to carry out social service obligations. The commercial aspects do not always dictate the continuation of operation on a particular sector. In such unremunerative sectors, the Railways are taking a number of economy measures which include curtailment in staff, number of train services and reduction in infrastructure. These measures are taken to contain losses to the extent possible.

Regular Shuttle Service to Borra Caves in Andhra Pradesh

5153. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposed to run regular shuttle service to Borra Caves, a major tourist attraction site in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether the Railway authorities also allot land there to develop hotels and restaurants to boost tourism;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir, However, a one day Rail Road Package tour by 1 VK Passenger train from Visakhapatnam to Borraguhalu and Araku and back to Visakhapatnam is being conducted on weekends and holidays.

(b) to (d) Andhra Pradesh Government has evinced interest in developing restaurant at Borraguhalu on Railway land. However, as the land asked for is earmarked for developmental works in connection with Railway operations, State Government has been advised that it would not be possible to spare the said land.

Terms and Conditions of Bookstall Agreements on Railways

5154. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the terms and conditions of all the bookstall agreements on all Indian Railways (including M/s. A.H. Wheeler & Co.) are equal.

(b) if not, what are the complete details of differences thereof; and

(c) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to remove all the discrepancies in terms and conditions of the agreements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The renewal of bookstall agreement for a period of 9 years w.e.f. 1.1.1967 was granted to M/s. A.H. Wheeler & Co., and M/s. Higginbothams Ltd., in view of the their past background. In case of other bookstalls, licence is renewed after every 5 years, which is in line with other catering/vending licences on Indian Railways.

(c) While licence fee at the rate of 4% of sales turnover is being charged from M/s. A.H. Wheeler & co. and M/ s. Higginbothams, in case of book stalls of pholanthropic societies and other categories zonal Railways decide their licence fee, which is subject to minimum of 2-1/2% of sales turnover and Rs. 750/- per stall per annum respectively.

(d) No, Sir.

Authorities of SER Hotel, Puri, Convicted by Court

5155. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the authorities of South-Eastern Railway Hotel, Puri have been convicted by the court for violation of the Prevention and Control of Pollution Act, 1974;